



Department of Justice

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HOGSETT ANNOUNCES FORMAL CHARGES, NEW ALLEGATIONS AFTER INVESTIGATION OF CLAY COUNTY MAN IN “SEXTORTION” SCHEME

Defendant now charged with exploiting at least twelve male and female children, investigation continues into hundreds of additional potential victims

PRESS RELEASE

INDIANAPOLIS – On April 6, 2012, Richard L. Finkbiner, age 39, of Brazil, Indiana, was arrested by federal authorities after being charged with the sexual exploitation of two minors by inducing and coercing them into sexually explicit activity online. In serving the search warrant at Finkbiner’s Clay County home, the Federal Bureau of Investigation uncovered thousands of sexually explicit images and videos depicting hundreds of possible victims.

After three months of forensic analysis and investigation, United States Attorney Joseph H. Hogsett announced today that Finkbiner now faces additional charges related to his alleged “sextortion” scheme. In a formal Information filed this morning, federal prosecutors allege that they have located and identified ten additional male and female minor victims across the country, and Finkbiner now faces a total of ten counts of sexual exploitation of children, two counts of extortion and one count of possession of child pornography.

“These charges formalize allegations of a systematic scheme to victimize hundreds of children and teenagers all over the country,” said Hogsett. “Thanks to the tireless work of investigators, over the last three months we have been able to identify and contact many victims of these alleged acts. This process is ongoing, and we continue to do all we can to offer support after the nightmare they are alleged to have endured.”

The Information charges Finkbiner with the sexual exploitation of nine boys and one girl, including a victim located in Avon, Indiana. The locations and ages of the charged child exploitation victims are as follows:

Count	Victim	Victim's Age	Victim's Location
1	John Doe 1	16	Avon, Indiana
2	John Doe 2	14	Sissonville, West Virginia
3	John Doe 3	14	Dubuque, Iowa
4	John Doe 4	15	River Falls, Wisconsin
5	John Doe 5	15	Cincinnati, Ohio
6	John Doe 6	16	Hamlin, New York
7	John Doe 7	12	Grand Rapids, Michigan
8	John Doe 8	15	Fairview Heights, Illinois
9	Jane Doe 1	17	Cincinnati, Ohio
10	John Doe 9	15	Fort Collins, Colorado

Finkbiner is charged with extorting two additional female victims: Jane Doe 2, 16 years old, of Anchorage, Alaska, and Jane Doe 3, 14 years old, of St. Peters, Minnesota. Finkbiner is alleged to have threatened them with the distribution of sexually suggestive and/or partially nude images. Finkbiner is also charged with possession of child pornography, both for possessing the images he captured from the charged sexual exploitation victims, as well as an alleged collection of child pornography gathered from the internet.

The formal charges filed in federal court describe a complex and systematic criminal scheme. Finkbiner is alleged to have used the Internet to prey upon children and teens from across the country, including locations as widespread as Avon, Indiana, all the way to Anchorage, Alaska. For more than a year, Finkbiner allegedly extorted and saved visual depictions of hundreds of individuals engaged in sexually explicit or sexually suggestive conduct, including the twelve minor victims named above.

The three month forensic investigation has provided additional details into the scheme allegedly used by Finkbiner. According to the Information, Finkbiner used Omegle.com, as well as other anonymous video chat websites, to locate children on the internet. The information alleges that he then utilized "fake webcam" software to display pornographic videos of adults and of children to his victims, which Finkbiner claimed to be live feeds from his webcam.

While displaying these videos to his chat partners, Finkbiner would allegedly then induce these victims to engage in sexually explicit or suggestive activity themselves, which he secretly recorded. The Information then alleges that Finkbiner would confront his chat partners with the videos of their activities, threatening to publish the videos to pornographic websites or send them

to the victims' friends, family and school teachers unless they became his "cam slaves" and engaged in additional sexually explicit activity, which Finkbiner also recorded.

According to Assistant U.S. Attorneys Zachary A. Myers and A. Brant Cook, who are prosecuting the case for the government, investigators continue to process and examine the thousands of images and videos seized during the execution of the April search warrant. Finkbiner faces a maximum of 30 years in prison for each count of sexual exploitation of children, a maximum of 2 years in prison for each count of extortion and a maximum of 10 years in prison for possession of child pornography. Finkbiner also faces a fine of up to \$250,000 for each of the charged offenses.

An initial hearing will be scheduled in Terre Haute, before a U.S. Magistrate Judge. Finkbiner has been in the custody of the United States Marshals Service since his arrest on April 6, 2012, and the Court has already ordered him to be detained until his trial.

These formal charges follow an extensive collaborative investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Oakland County (Michigan) Sheriff's Department, and the Prince George's County (Maryland) Police Department, with significant assistance from the Indiana State Police, the Clay County Sheriff's Department, the Terre Haute Police Department and the Kokomo Police Department.

This case was brought as part of the U.S. Attorney's Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse launched in May 2006 by the Department of Justice. Led by United States Attorneys' Offices and the Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section (CEOS), Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as to identify and rescue victims. For more on Project Safe Childhood, visit www.projectsafechildhood.gov

An Information is only a charge and is not evidence of guilt. A defendant is presumed innocent and is entitled to a fair trial at which the government must prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

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